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19 November 1958

ORA Project S-403

Soviet Civil Defense and Air Raid Shelter Construction

(Briefing Notes for PCI)

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NSA review completed

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SOVIET CIVIL DEFENSE  
AND AIR-RAID SHELTER CONSTRUCTION

I. You will recall my briefing on Soviet Civil Defense of 19 March wherein we presented a report concurred in by members of the IAC.

The principal conclusions in that report included:

A. The Soviet shelter construction program has reflected a sustained effort and will probably be continued.

B. Although no firm estimate could be made of the number of persons afforded shelter protection -- we believed a minimum of 10 to 15 million of the urban population of 74 million were afforded varying degrees of protection -- could run higher.

II. These conclusions are still believed valid despite negative reports

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A. Not likely [redacted] would be permitted access to identifiable shelter construction -- probably a classified defense measure in the USSR.

III. Construction information received since March briefing includes:

A. Soviets announced this year that the first section of new Kiev subway will become operative in 1960. One station described as "deepest" in the USSR. Good chance it is dual purpose -- adapted for shelter use.

B. [redacted] have described air raid shelter construction to include basement shelters and the new subway in Kiev, and underground shelters in two USSR factories. One worked in factory making shelter doors.

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C. Construction of several air raid bunkers in Riga confirmed by new information. Single reports of underground headquarters in Vilnius and Lvov received and an underground headquarters for the USSR government again reported outside Moscow.

D. Civil defense publications recently received continue to stress the value of basement shelter, even under conditions of atomic attack -- one states they "are the protective structures which serve the greatest masses of the people."

E. Definitely has been shelter construction program in Poland -- around 200 [ ] reports received. This year, head of civil defense stated publicly "many" shelters had been built, Polish radio complained of "thousands" of cases of vandalism and theft in air raid shelters.

IV. Soviet civil defense retains high or increasing priority in other areas.

A. First Deputy Minister of MVD for MPVO\* (civil defense) mentioned this summer -- Deputy Minister for MPVO identified only last February.

B. [ ] civil defense officials now have voice in new industrial site location for dispersal purposes.

C. Fitted with accelerated training program, reports of air raid drills 1956-1958 have now been received from twelve Soviet cities.

\* Literally, local Antiair Defense.